



Friends of the Wade

The Marion E. Wade Center Wheaton College

The Wade Co-Hosts Sayers Convention in 2007

Though Dorothy L. Sayers wrote over half a century ago, her books, essays, and plays continue to draw a large spectrum of readers.



Almost everyone can find something to enjoy in Sayers's varied body of work, which includes her classic detective novels, her respected and lively translation of Dante, her essays on social and religious issues, and her radio and

stage dramas. All of her writings hold lasting appeal due to their insight, humor, and clarity of expression.

Since its inception in 1976, the Dorothy L. Sayers Society in England has been promoting Sayers's work through educational seminars, competitions, numerous publications, and their archive of research materials. The largest event the Society hosts is their annual convention, which is usually held in various colleges and universities throughout England. Next year, for only the second time in its history, the Sayers Society will hold the convention in the United States. As with the first U.S. convention in 1997, the Wade Center is pleased to partner with the Sayers Society to host the event at Wheaton College.

The conference will begin on June 13—the anniversary of Sayers's birth—and will conclude on Sunday, June 17. An inaugural banquet will commemorate Sayers's birthday, as well as celebrate the birthday of Dr. Barbara Reynolds, co-founder of our journal *SEVEN* and President of the Sayers Society. Over the subsequent days, attendees will hear talks by numerous experts on Sayers-related topics,

and will have opportunities to examine and use the Wade Center's voluminous collection of Sayers manuscripts, letters, and other papers. A particular highlight of the convention will be the staging of the play "Gaudy Night" by Lifeline Theatre of Chicago (this performance will be open to the public as well). Conference-goers will also be privileged to hear Frances Limoncelli, the playwright who adapted this well-known Sayers mystery for Lifeline, speak on her creative process.

A part of the Wade Center's ongoing mission is to promote appreciation for and scholarship on the Wade authors through conducting conferences. Because of financial support from Friends of the Wade, we are able to keep costs of these events reasonable and thereby make them accessible to people from a wide range of circumstances. If you are interested in contributing to the Sayers Convention in some way, such as funding a student scholarship; helping under-write the Lifeline Theatre performance or Ms. Limoncelli's lecture; sponsoring a tea break; or yet another aspect, you may designate your gifts accordingly or contact us to discuss possible arrangements.

There will also be opportunities to volunteer for the conference—simply let us know of your interest and we will follow up with you. Finally, we hope you may be able to join us at the 2007 Dorothy L. Sayers Convention. Registration information will be available on our website early in the new year. **W**

"The absence of noise is not in all cases the same thing as the presence of peace."

—Charles Williams



EDITING & DESIGN Rachel Mink

The Marion E. Wade Center
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

Phone 630-752-5908
Fax 630-752-5459
wade@wheaton.edu

New web address:
www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/

As you read this, my six-month study leave, which began July 1, is nearing its end. During these months away from the office, I have worked on several writing and research projects, and fulfilled various speaking engagements. High priorities have included shaping the Wade Chair inaugural address into a publishable form, and also reworking my talks from last spring in Korea for publication there. After speaking at the C.S. Lewis Festival in Petoskey, Michigan, I traveled to England to speak, to do research on Lewis, and to build connections regarding possible manuscript acquisitions.

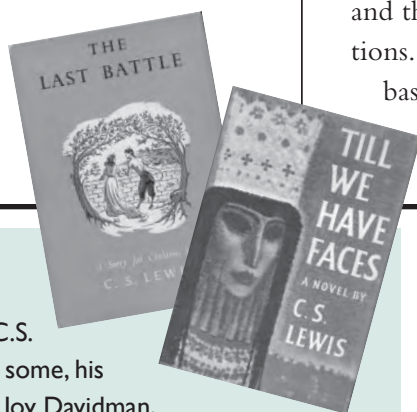
Though the time away from the Wade Center has been productive, my short times back have also been exciting. In my absence, the Wade staff has completed numerous outreach elements that have long been planned, including the website, a new museum wall exhibit, and the secure museum display case. I have developed an even greater appreciation for my staff in the last few months; they have navigated many challenges in my absence to not only carry out the usual tasks of running the Wade, but also to accomplish these additional projects, continuing to make the treasures of the Wade Center available in new ways. A special thanks to each of you who supported them in this work. I look forward to returning to the office in January and giving you a more complete update on the results of my sabbatical. May you know the hope and peace of Advent this month amidst the holiday rush.

WITH ALL GOOD WISHES,

C. Mitchell

Did You Know?

This year is the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Till We Have Faces*, considered by many scholars to be C.S. Lewis's finest work of fiction, and by some, his best book. The novel is dedicated to Joy Davidman, whom Lewis married in that same year. *The Last Battle* was also published in 1956. Dr. Lyle Dorsett, Davidman biographer and former director of the Wade Center, states that Joy's influence can be seen in both novels. Joy herself said that although she did not think she could write as well as Lewis, she could help him write more like himself. (See *A Love Observed*, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1998. 117, 147.) **W**



Wade Growth in 2006

In 2005, the Wade Center saw numerous staffing changes: Heidi Truty assumed the role of Head of Public Services, Laura Schmidt returned to the Wade as archivist, and Rachel Mink joined the staff as administrative and editorial support. Just recently, Shawn Mrakovich started full-time hours as the office coordinator. As the Wade's team has adjusted after a year of fluctuations and grown into greater stability in 2006, it has become possible to complete long-awaited tasks as well as new projects.

One task that had been relegated to the back-burner for years because of its complexity and size was the installation of a new website. Our former site was one page that contained only rudimentary information on our facility and resources. Many people had difficulty finding it online even when searching specifically for information about our seven authors. This past spring, the whole staff revived discussions from years past to determine what would go on a website, and how it would work. A summer filled with revisions and tests solved many issues and raised others, and by fall, thanks to the tireless efforts of Les Barker and Craig Taylor in Wheaton College's Marketing Communications department, we were able to build a site that is attractive, accessible, thorough, and that forms a strong foundation for future additions. This new resource will reduce the number of

basic questions we receive by phone and email, as well as attract visitors who may not otherwise learn about us.

The Wade staff also spent the summer planning a new wall display for the museum. The new exhibit, conceived by Marj Mead, and designed by Shawn Mrakovich and student worker Stephanie Plichta, draws out the symbolism in Charles Williams's novel *The Place of the Lion*, and contextualizes the book in Williams's body of work. It is interesting to note that it was over this book that Williams and C.S. Lewis first began correspondence, while Williams was simul-



Heidi Truty and Chris Mitchell unpack the crate containing the Sayers and Reynolds correspondence

taneously editing Lewis's book *The Allegory of Love* for the Oxford University Press. Conveniently, it turned out that Dr. Rolland Hein's syllabus for the fall sessions of "Reading at the Wade" (our Saturday morning book group) also included *The Place of the Lion*.

A further new museum addition, about which many of you already know, is the installation of the custom display case, generously made possible by Wheaton College's Class of 1961 as their 45th reunion gift. Another recent gift from Wheaton alumni is an oil painting by the Russian painter Nicolai Remisoff received from Mary ('43) and Robert "Dag" ('43) Johnson. Entitled "Peonies," this piece now hangs alongside the Reading Room's windows to the garden, giving researchers (and the archivists) a glimpse of spring even now while winter approaches.

Dr. K. James Gilchrist (recipient of the 2003 Kilby Research Grant) recently donated his collection of World War I artifacts, including items such as uniform tags and shell fragments, that he obtained in the course of his research on C.S. Lewis's military service for his book *A Morning After War*. An especially notable archival acquisition this year is the Sayers and Reynolds correspondence, which comprises over 300 letters that Dr. Barbara Reynolds and Dorothy L. Sayers exchanged from 1946 until just before Sayers's death in 1957. We were able to purchase this superb manuscript collection thanks to designated gifts from many Friends of the Wade.

None of these projects could have been completed without the support our staff and facility receive from the Friends of the Wade. Your investment in this work through volunteering, donations, prayer, referrals, and friendship sustains the Wade Center's existing work and makes continued growth possible. We thank you and welcome your visit anytime. **W**

Spotlight on *SEVEN*

Volume 23

We are pleased to announce the release of Volume 23 of *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*. This issue opens with Richard Gill's insightful analysis of how G.K. Chesterton's sense of wonder influenced his social theories. Another piece, by Jack Knowles, compiles C.S. Lewis's criticism of American literature through letters, diary entries, and marginalia. Much of Knowles' material comes from the Wade Center's Lewis library holdings.

Other articles included in Volume 23 are Emma Hawkins' article "Eagles with Attitude" (on Tolkien's *The Hobbit*), philosopher Mark Talbot's review of Victor Reppert's book *C.S. Lewis's Dangerous Idea: In Defense of the Argument from Reason*, Don King's bibliography of Joy Davidman's writings, and various book reviews.

Of special note in this issue is Christopher Dean's presentation of selections of hitherto unpublished Dorothy L. Sayers correspondence from the Sayers Society's collection. In 2004, Norah Lambourne, a friend and collaborator of Dorothy Sayers, presented the Sayers Society with 93 of the letters she had received from Sayers from 1946 until the author's death in 1957. Sayers and Lambourne worked together on numerous large theatrical productions, but also worked up small artistic projects with friends and family in mind. The letters cover personal and professional matters, but particularly delightful are the humorous sketches that accompany many of Sayers's cat stories. To order *SEVEN*, contact the Wade Center or download an order form on our website. **W**

The Marion E. Wade Center
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois 60187



J.R.R. Tolkien drew this picture of Father Christmas for his children. The Bodleian Library in Oxford has turned several of the drawings from Tolkien's "Father Christmas Letters" into Christmas greeting cards, which are available at the Wade Center gift store.

**Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year
from the Wade staff!**

Heidi Butef *Maioire Mead*
Shawn Makovich
Laura Schmidt
Rachel Muir *C. Mitchell*